This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:

determining, by a first device, a possibility of an invalidation of a second device, wherein the first device is coupled to the second device via a fabric;

sending a query from the first device to validate the second device, in response to determining the possibility of the invalidation of the second device; and

determining, at the first device, whether to continue I/O operations from the first device to the second device based on receiving a response to the query within a time period, wherein the method further comprises:

(i) receiving the query at the second device, prior to determining, at the first device, whether to continue I/O operations from the first device to the second device;

(ii) determining, at the second device, whether the first device is a valid initiator to the second device; and

(iii) sending the response from the second device, wherein the response indicates that the second device does not consider the first device to be logged in to the second device, in response to determining that the first device is not the valid initiator to the second device, wherein the first device uses a PDISC Extended Link Service frame, a first LS_ACC frame, a first LOGO frame, and a first LS_RJT frame, wherein the second device uses a second LS_ACC frame, a second LOGO frame, and a second LS_RJT frame, and wherein any Input/Ouput (I/O) in progress in the second device is not disrupted in case a login of the first device to the second device is not needed.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein determining, by the first device, the possibility of the invalidation of the second device, further comprises:

determining whether the first device has received either a notification of a state change from the fabric or has timed out while waiting for a completion of an I/O operation sent from the first device to the second device.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein sending the query further comprises:

sending a service frame from the first device to the second device, wherein the service frame is capable of determining a presence of the second device without disrupting the I/O operations.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the service frame is [[a]] the PDISC Extended Link Service frame.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

continuing the I/O operations, if the response to the query within the time period is a frame that validates the World Wide Node Name and the World Wide Port name associated with a connection to the second device.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the frame is [[an]] the first LS_ACC frame.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

terminating a connection from the first device to the second device, if the response to the query is not received within the time period or if the response is a frame that indicates that the second device does not consider the first device to be logged in to the second device.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the frame is [[a]] the first LOGO frame or [[a]] the first LS_RJT frame.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving the query at the second device, prior to determining, at the first device, whether to continue I/O operations from the first device to the second device;

determining, at the second device, whether the first device is considered to be logged in to the second device; and

sending the response from the second device, wherein the response indicates that the second device considers the first device to be logged in to the second device, in response to determining that the first device is considered to be logged in to the second device.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving the query at the second device, prior to determining, at the first device, whether to continue I/O operations from the first device to the second device;

determining, at the second device, whether the first device is considered to be logged in to the second device; and

sending the response from the second device, wherein the response indicates that the second device does not consider the first device to be logged in to the second device, in response to determining that the first device is not considered to be logged in to the second device.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second devices are fibre channel adapters coupled to primary and secondary storage controllers respectively, wherein the fabric is a switched fabric, and wherein the fibre channel adapters communicate using extended link services commands.

13 – 36. (Canceled)